Is Nuclear Energy Good for the Environment?

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Although the last nuclear energy plant was last built in 1973, nuclear energy still has a large impact on the global population. [[1]](#footnote-1) In current news, Japan has once again faced a traumatic calamity pertaining to nuclear power after the earthquake they suffered in 9 units, including the Dai-ichi location. With the destruction of the power plant, the government attempts to downplay the suspicion that the nuclear waste escaped into the environment. The question that has arisen is nuclear energy safe to be practicing when it may cause harm to human life and the surrounding atmosphere? For example, nuclear reactors in 3 of the 9 units affected have suffered partial meltdowns, as high as 70% of damage to the core.[[2]](#footnote-2) Water surrounding the power plants that exploded has traces of contamination most likely the result of nuclear waste. There have been numerous different approaches on how to deal with this problem, such mainly by focusing on solutions that reduce temperatures and tries to restore electricity to it a relatively normal status.[[3]](#footnote-3) Although they all seems like tragedies we can’t afford to take, the demand for energy is too high to be satisfied by renewable energy sources. This is why nuclear energy is a good tool, and not too harmful for our world to accept: it provides a necessity to the increasing demand for energy.

Nuclear power is good for the environment, like the argument that it reduces the dependence on global warming.[[4]](#footnote-4) With nuclear energy present, nobody would require the older practices such as using coal, water or solar power. It is also proven to be more effective than the other renewable sources, as it reaches more of the population at a faster rate with superb results and satisfaction.[[5]](#footnote-5) At the start, building a nuke plant is cheaper, which is also a positive focus on the use of nuclear energy.[[6]](#footnote-6) By the year 2050, the demand for worldwide energy and electricity is going to be three times as much, and unreliable renewable sources are not capable of reaching those requirements even if you built a dam every year for the rest of civilization! Nuclear energy is a good thing when uninterrupted, it is not a negative for the future.

However, there is the counterargument, which believes nuclear energy is too dangerous to be used on a normal basis. For example, many say that nuclear energy pollutes the air, containing radiation and the cause of explosion.[[7]](#footnote-7) Radiation is the cause of thyroid cancer, and the explosiveness encourages terrorism. 8 They would say using nuclear power is a waste of time especially since it takes about 20 years to even build one! However, I rebuke these claims, stating that although they have closed nuclear plants, nukes still steadily increased their share of generating capacity in the US. They’re still generating business and they’re more reliable, widespread, more efficient than other renewable sources, and better for the future.

I want to use nuclear energy because electricity is a luxury society cannot afford to live without, and the fastest way to deliver it to the masses of people is by nuclear energy. Yes it can be dangerous—when interfered with an earthquake, what isn’t? If not handled by those who are trained to work with it, and yes after a while I may be more expensive than using water. However, it is longer lasting than solar, biomass or water can ever be; more powerful and efficient in satisfying the demand, and when not put in the wrong hands, it won’t “promote terrorism” in any kind of way. Nuclear energy is a serious case, but it’s a necessary component to offer electricity and power to people, and is the best solution to gratifying the increasing demand for energy.

1. Schwartz, Peter, and Spencer Reise. "Nuclear Power Is the Best Way to Address Global Warming." *The Environment* 2009, Volume 13 ed. Print. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Grier, Peter. "Japan Nuclear Update: Where Will They Put the Radioactive Water? - CSMonitor.com." *The Christian Science Monitor - CSMonitor.com*. The Christian Science Monitor, 1 Apr. 2011. Web. 08 Apr. 2011. <http://www.csmonitor.com/USA/2011/0401/Japan-nuclear-update-Where-will-they-put-the-radioactive-water> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. "Japan's Nuclear Crisis: Q&A | Detroit Free Press | Freep.com." *Detroit Free Press | Detroit News, Sports, Community, Entertainment, and Classifieds. Serving Detroit, Michigan | Freep.com*. Gannett Co. Inc, 15 Mar. 2011. Web. 08 Apr. 2011. <http://www.freep.com/article/20110315/NEWS07/103150409/Japan-s-nuclear-crisis-Q-A>. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. "Nuclear Power Is an Environmentally Unsound Way to Reduce Pollution." *The Environment*. Union of Concerned Scientists, 2007. Web. 11 Apr. 2011.

   8 “Nuclear Power Is an Environmentally Unsound Way to Reduce Pollution." *The Environment*. Union of Concerned Scientists, 2007. Web. 11 Apr. 2011. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)